
LA RIVER

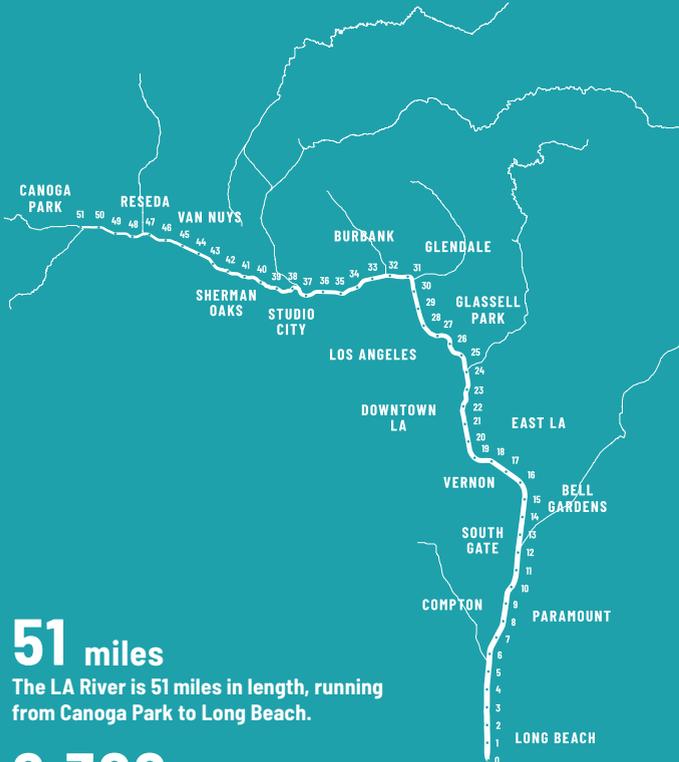
MASTER

PLAN

**ECOSYSTEMS, PARKS,
AND EQUITABLE ACCESS**

POCKET SUMMARY





51 miles

The LA River is 51 miles in length, running from Canoga Park to Long Beach.

2,300 acres

There are 2,300 acres of primarily publicly-owned land within the right-of-way, including the river channel.

1,000,000 people

There are nearly one million people who live within one mile of the LA River.

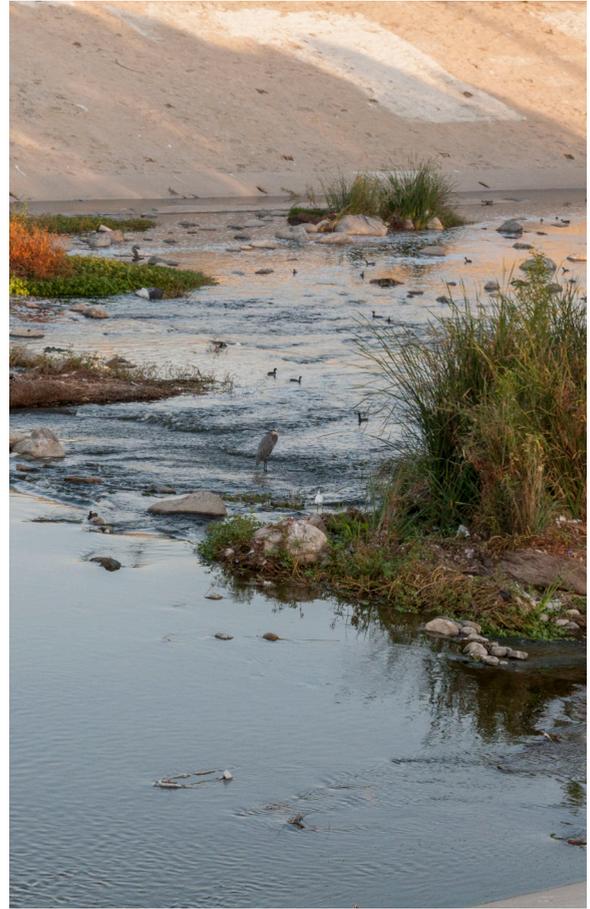
VISION

The Reimagined River

The iconic LA River flows through a 51-mile connected public open space that is seamlessly woven together with neighboring communities. It is an integral part of daily life in LA County—a place to enjoy the outdoors and to get across town, a place to appreciate the serene and to bring all people together, a place to celebrate a thriving urban habitat and understand infrastructure, a place to learn from the past and to shape the future.

The California Floristic Province is one of five of Mediterranean Global Diversity Hotspots.

Mediterranean Climate Regions make up 2% of the Earth's land surface but contain 20% of the world's plant species. The California Floristic Province has 3,500 plant species, 61% of which are native and regularly found in this region.



Soft bottom sections of the river adjacent to Griffith Park provide in-channel species habitat, river mile 30.1. Source: OLIN, 2018.



The Black-crowned Night-Heron is one of 132 rare and threatened species that lives near the river. Source: California Department of Fish and Wildlife. California Natural Diversity Database, October 2016.

Historically, the river has been both periodically dry and, at times, prone to severe flooding.

These seasonal natural disturbances supported habitat and water for numerous endemic plants and animals, as well as migratory birds resting as they traveled the Pacific Flyway.

Having equitable, safe, inclusive, connective, and accessible parks is critical for public health and social equity. Research shows access to park space and health are directly linked. Increasing overall acres of park land and access to parks positively benefit communities such as by reducing rates of preventable diseases like diabetes and obesity.

Twelve of the 17 cities along the LA River lack the recommended LA County four acres of park space per 1,000 people. Furthermore, twelve of the seventeen cities within a mile of the river are in the lower quartile (under 2.4 acres per 1,000 people) among park and recreation agencies in the Pacific Southwest tracked by the National Recreation and Park Association.



Pedestrians often frequent the LA River trail for leisure, exercise, and during community events. SELA Cultural Arts Festival, river mile 12.3.
Source: LA County Public Works, 2018.

Public Engagement Feedback

61%

OF SURVEY AND COMMUNITY MEETING PARTICIPANTS SAID THAT THEY **DO NOT USE THE LA RIVER DUE TO SAFETY**

52%

OF SURVEY AND COMMUNITY MEETING PARTICIPANTS IDENTIFIED **PROTECTING VULNERABLE PLANTS AND ANIMALS AS THEIR TOP PRIORITY**

Goals About Ecosystems, Parks, and Equitable Access

Provide equitable, inclusive, and safe parks, open space, and trails.

Support healthy, connected ecosystems.

Enhance opportunities for equitable access to the river corridor.

Additional Goals

[SEE THE FULL PLAN TO LEARN MORE](#)

Reduce flood risk and improve resiliency.

Embrace and enhance opportunities for local arts and culture.

Address potential adverse impacts to housing affordability and people experiencing homelessness.

Foster opportunities for continued community engagement, development, and education.

Improve local water supply reliability.

Promote healthy, safe, clean water.



GOAL

Provide equitable, inclusive, and safe parks, open space, and trails.

Members of the community identified walking and bicycling as the top two activities they participate in along the river—with participation in these two activities together greater than the participation in all other activities combined. Yet, **61% said they do not use the river due to safety concerns.** By aiming to provide 51 miles of safe, connected open space, the LA River can be a valued recreational resource for the surrounding communities in LA County.

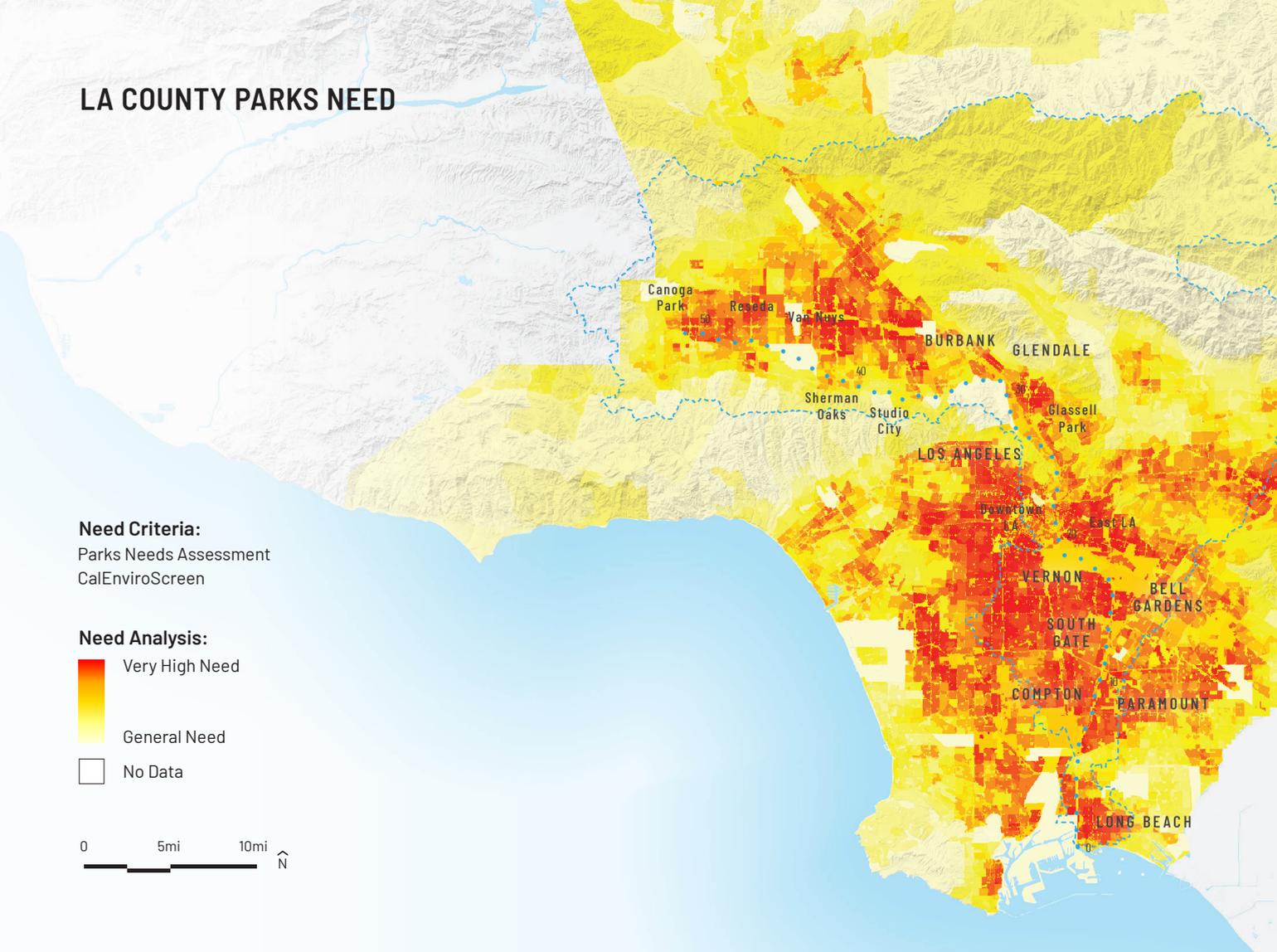
The availability of parks creates a healthier and more cohesive community. Source: LA County Public Works, 2018.

LA COUNTY PARKS NEED

Need Criteria:

Parks Needs Assessment
CalEnviroScreen

Need Analysis:



PAVILION CADENCE



Shade Pavilion

Tier I (every 0.4 - 0.6 miles)



Rest Pavilion

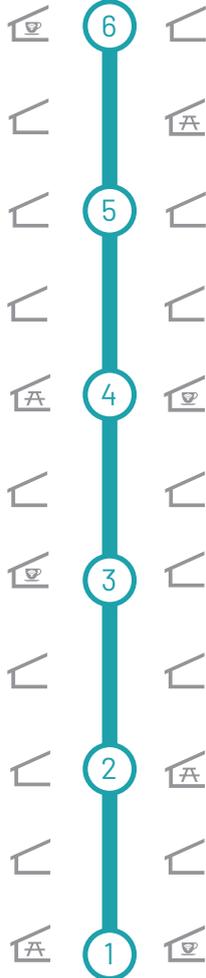
Tier II (every 0.8 - 1.2 miles)



Gathering Pavilion

Tier III (every 2 - 3 miles)

Varying in size and range of amenities, three tiers of pavilions will provide opportunities for shade, rest, and gathering at regular intervals along the length of the river.



Parks Need

The LA River Master Plan evaluates park need based on park access and availability, but also by considering an area's level of exposure to poor environmental conditions where access to open space and recreation can have the greatest impact on multiple needs.

32 OF 51 RIVER MILES ARE
CURRENTLY ACCESSIBLE
BY TRAILS



GOAL

Support healthy,
connected ecosystems.

The LA River watershed sits within one of the world's most diverse Mediterranean biodiversity hotspots and along the Pacific Flyway. Due to urbanization, the region has the largest number of endangered and threatened species and species of special concern in the contiguous 48 states. The river ecosystem has been altered from its historic state, first through agriculture and irrigation and later through channelization. In community meetings and surveys, **52% of participants said the issue most important was protecting vulnerable plants and animals.** Planning and development efforts along the river must create habitat areas large enough to support native functioning ecosystems.

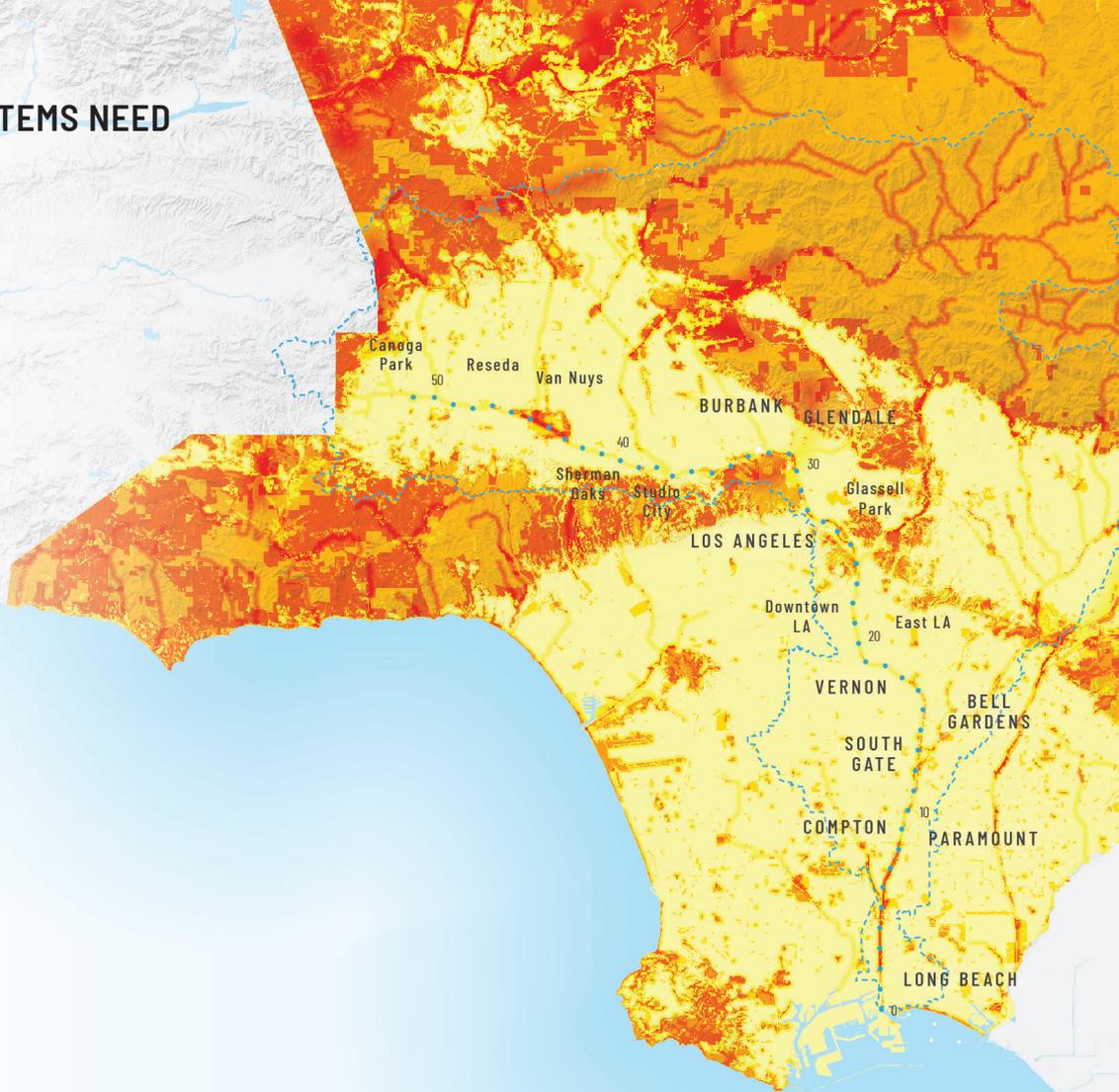
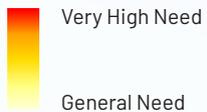
The river is an important ecosystem that supports a variety of plant and animal life throughout the highly urbanized landscape of LA County. Source: KCET Departures, South L.A. Willow Street, 2010.

LA COUNTY ECOSYSTEMS NEED

Need Criteria:

- Habitat Areas
- Habitat Areas Buffer
- Linkages and Confluences
- Unprotected Areas

Need Analysis:





Ecosystems Need

In an urban environment like LA, sustaining healthy ecosystems requires protecting areas with high biodiversity; enhancing, expanding, and adding habitat in strategic locations; and creating linkages between habitat areas.

Utilizing the river as an educational tool will allow younger and future generations to become good stewards of the environment.

Source: Scott L, 2014.



GOAL

Enhance opportunities for equitable access to the river corridor.

Today, ease and availability of access to trails along the LA River is highly variable. About 90 access points connect people to trails that serve 32 of the river's 51 miles. Yet, **only one-third of these access points have signs and only 70% connect to sidewalks.** Many access points are well served by bus, but only two Metro rail stops fall within a half mile of an access point to the river. It is therefore not surprising that one of the top five reasons community residents cited for not visiting the LA River is simply not knowing where to go. The LA River is intended to be a resource for use by all of LA County, and to be a resource the river must be accessible and usable.

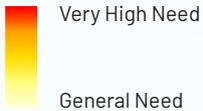
The SELA Arts Festival brings people and communities together at river mile 11.7. Source: OLIN, 2018.

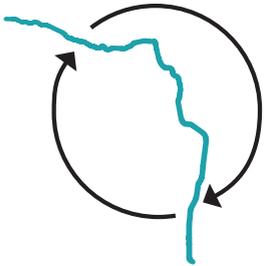
LA COUNTY ACCESS NEED

Need Criteria:

- River Trail Gaps
- River Trail Access Points
- Adjacent Trails
- Health Composite
- Proximity to Metro Stops, Parks, and Schools

Need Analysis:

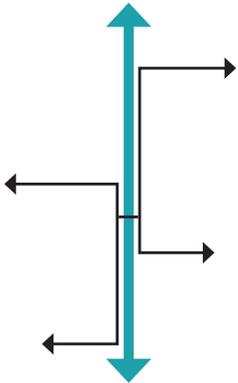




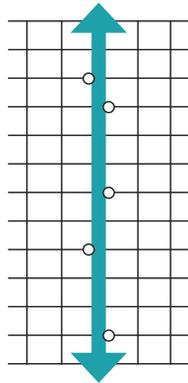
REGIONAL CONNECTIONS



ENVIRONMENTAL GRAPHICS



LOCAL CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PROJECTS AND EXISTING AMENITIES



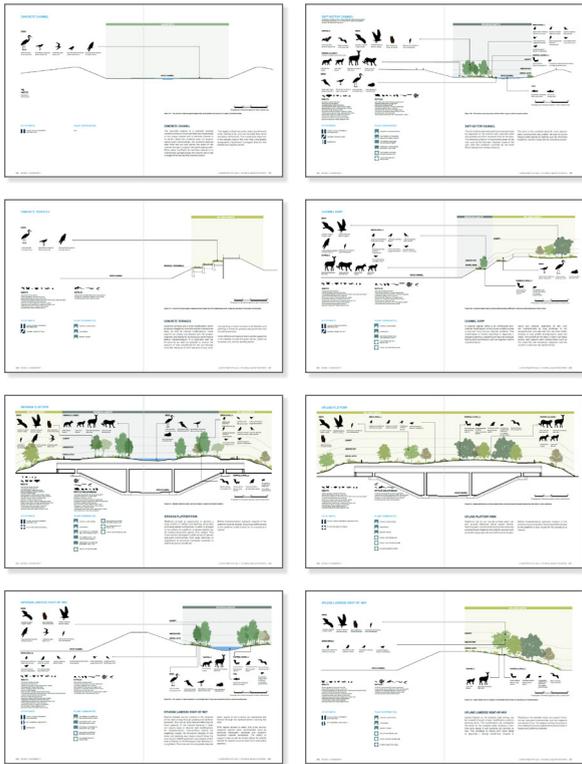
CONNECTIONS TO THE STREET GRID

Access Need

Public access to the LA River means a continuous 51-mile river trail with frequent access points and a network of lateral trail connections that improve access to outdoor space and opportunities for recreation.

Highlighting regional connections, neighborhood connections, infrastructural connections, and wayfinding creates a more accessible and welcoming river trail.

Biodiversity Profiles: Examples from the Master Plan



The biodiversity profiles describe both existing and potential future conditions and are examples of how biodiversity must be present throughout all projects. See the Appendix Volume II: Technical Backup Document for more information regarding the biodiversity profiles.

Plant Communities Along the LA River

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ALLUVIAL FAN SAGE SCRUB



COASTAL SAGE SCRUB
- 

SOUTHERN COAST LIVE OAK RIPARIAN FOREST



PERENNIAL FRESHWATER EMERGENT WETLAND
- 

CALIFORNIA WALNUT WOODLAND



COAST LIVE OAK WOODLAND
- 

CHAPARRAL



DESERT SCRUB
- 

VALLEY OAK WOODLAND



SOUTHERN SYCAMORE RIPARIAN WOODLAND
- 

SOUTHERN COTTONWOOD-WILLOW RIPARIAN FOREST



CLIMATE ADAPTED TREES

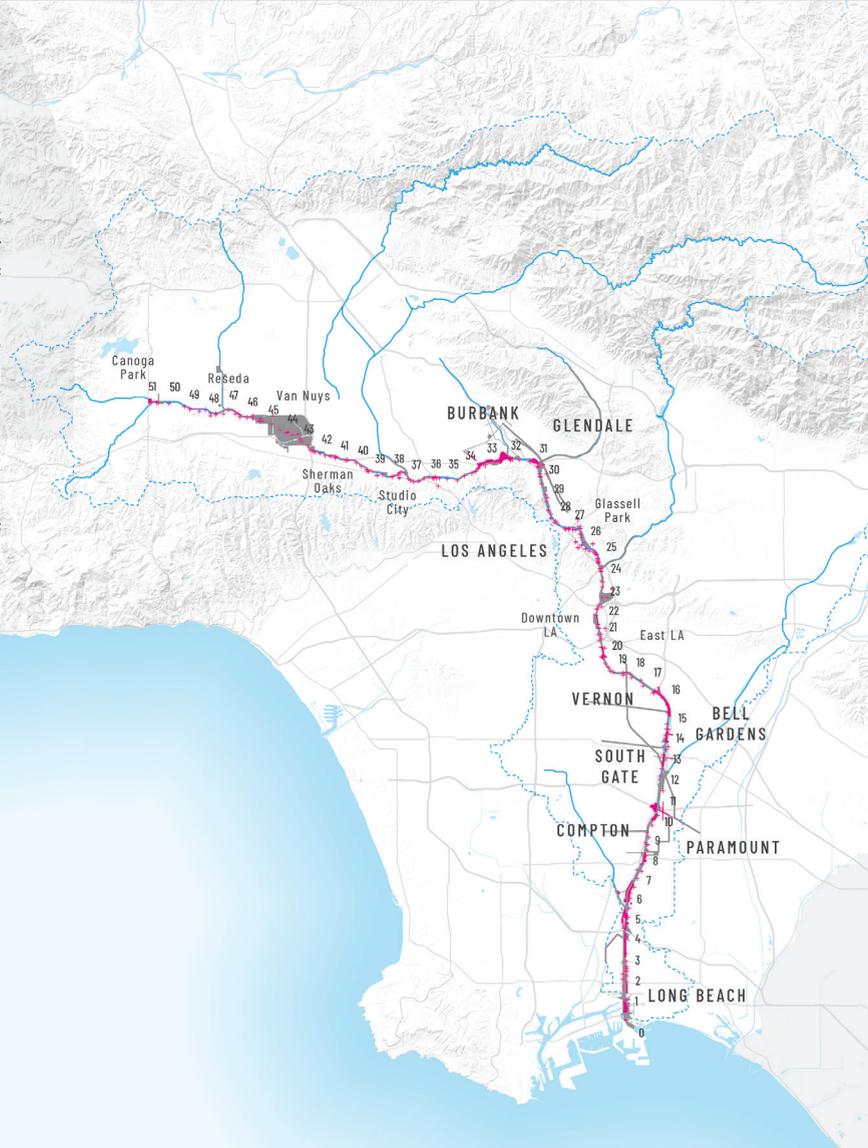
A biodiversity profile is a useful tool for project implementers to assess whether a proposed project supports a diverse ecological community because it illustrates the plant communities, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and insects that can be sustained through the range of built conditions along the LA River. These profiles can be used to describe both existing and proposed future conditions, from algae mats in the concrete channel to a riparian soft-bottom basin, and are examples of how biodiversity must be present throughout all proposed projects.

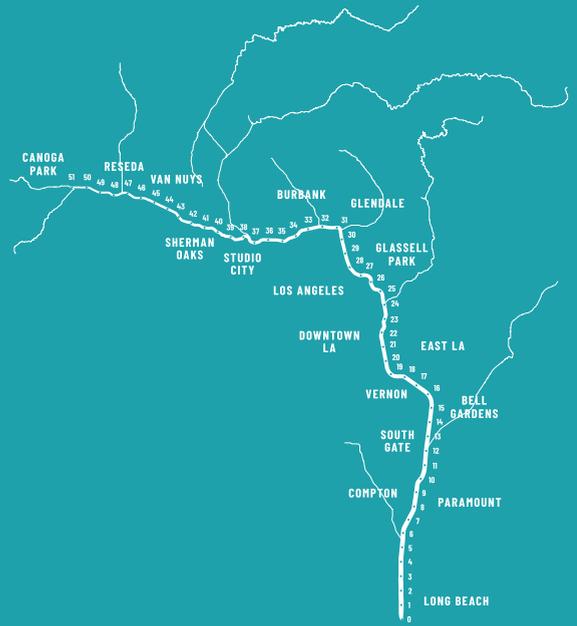
Proposed Project Sites and Planned Major Projects:

With a right-of-way that includes over 2,300 acres of primarily publicly owned land, the LA River has great potential to serve as the backbone of an open space network across LA County. The Master Plan specifically identifies a suite of 78 projects and sites together have the potential to transform the LA River, its right-of-way, and adjacent land into a vibrant, multibenefit corridor. This 51-mile backbone would be unique within the county, providing park space to underserved adjacent communities, offering a variety of experiences from one mile to the next, and serving as a destination for the entire county and beyond.

Proposed Project Sites and Planned Major Projects

-  M, L, XL Proposed Site
-  M, L, XL Planned Major Project
-  XS, S Proposed Site







For more info, visit
www.LARiverMasterPlan.org

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